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DairyEXCELLENCE

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Emily Barge, 717-346-0849; ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org

Speaker photos available for download here.

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THREE PA DAIRY PRODUCERS TO SPEAK AT DAIRY FINANCIAL & RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

The “Farm Level View” Session Will Include a Producer Panel Discussion

Harrisburg, Pa. – Three Pennsylvania dairy producers will speak at the 13th annual Dairy Financial and Risk Management Conference, titled “Adjusting the Lens,” on September 14 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. This year’s conference will help dairy financial consultants, lending representatives, and interested dairy producers bring their lens into focus. Speakers will share their unique perspectives on everyday costs to control at the farm level, key performance indicators for Pennsylvania dairy production, and dairy markets and economic forces. The event will be held on Wednesday, September 14 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel in Harrisburg, Pa. Individuals can register online at www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/financial-conference or call 717-346-0849.

“We are looking forward to hearing from these dairy producers who are forward-thinking and have utilized outside resources to advance their operations,” said Zach Myers, risk education manager at the Center for Dairy Excellence. “Their perspectives will help dairy business consultants and lending representatives understand producers’ vantage points and brainstorm how they can continue to help their dairy clients move forward to boost profitability.”

During the producer panel discussion, titled “A Farm-Level View,” three PA dairy farmers will describe the specific steps they have taken to move their business forward, including any reinvestments or modernization projects, business transformations, or transition plans. They will share their future goals and describe what type of outside assistance — including consultants, resources, or grant programs — have helped them take those initial steps forward. All three producers have been guests on the Center’s [Cow-Side Conversations podcast](#) and have worked with the Center’s [On-Farm Teams](#) to help their businesses succeed. Learn more about each producer:

- **Donny Barch of Merrimart Farms will discuss his robotics transformation project.**

“We definitely found out where our edge is. I would have hated to start this robotics project and then realized all of a sudden we need to cut out [certain aspects]. Now we know how far we can go and how many extra things we can add to this barn. Especially for a farm our size, it’s invaluable just how far the grant money went and the

information we were able to get out of it. It helped jumpstart everything. It gave me the confidence I needed to move forward with a project like this. It went from a pipe dream to a reality," Donny shared.

- **Greta Snider Halahan of Singing Brook Farms will share her reinvestment project and management strategy.**

"Your protocols are only as good as the people who are managing them. I'm very proud of the protocols and how far we've come in certain areas, but we have wonderful employees who care about the cows every bit as much as I do. They are excellent at following the protocols and very resilient and willing to work with our way of managing things," Greta said.

- **Jared Kurtz of Kurtland Farms will share the steps his family has taken with transition planning.**

"There has to be mutual respect, understanding, and a willingness to work together and not get frustrated quickly. With a family business, that can be challenging when your lives are so intertwined. Have grace with one another. At the end of the day, the goal is to have a successful, productive dairy operation that benefits everyone. That's really what you need to have a good transition," Jared explained.

The Dairy Financial and Risk Management will also include the following speakers:

- **Betty Berning – "A Dairy Market Snapshot: 2022 Highlights and 2023 Market Forces."** Milk prices might look good for 2022, but how soon are they going to fall? This session will provide a snapshot of 2022 dairy markets and analyze future market forces that will affect the dairy economy heading into 2023.
- **Wayne Brubaker and Mike Hosterman – "PA Performance Indicators: Where Do We Stand?"** Pennsylvania dairy producers have their own unique goals, but comparing their performance to their peers across the state can help drive efficiency and success. This session will discuss key performance indicators across Pennsylvania dairy operations.
- **Tim Beck and Rainey Rosemond – "Foraging for Profits: Crop Production Costs and Feeding Management Decisions."** On most dairy farms, feed and forage costs can ultimately dictate production costs and on-farm profitability. This session will not only dissect feed and forage costs, but offer strategies for using them to improve a farm's bottom line.

The cost to attend this year's Dairy Financial and Risk Management Conference is \$250 per person, discounted to \$225 for those who are representatives of the Center for Dairy Excellence Allies for Advancement.

For more information about the program and to register for the event, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/financial-conference or call Zach Myers at 717-346-0849.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center's mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org.

Center for Dairy Excellence ▼ 2301 North Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110 ▼ 717-346-0849 ▼

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